Visit by Jewish Delegation

945. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a delegation of American Jewish lobby visited New Delhi for India-Israel friendship last month;

(b) the Ministers and officials whom they met; and

(c) whether there is a change in Government's policy with relation to Israel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) A delegation of the American Jewish Committee visited India in June 2004 to enhance and promote relations between India and USA.

(b) The delegation made a courtesy call on National Security Adviser and interacted with officials of the Ministry of External Affairs dealing with bilateral relations with USA.

(c) There has been no change in the Government's commitment to the continued development of relations with Israel based on mutually beneficial cooperation. This would, however, in no way dilute our principled support for the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service

946. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service was of the peace initiatives by Government for promoting peace between India and Pakistan;

(b) whether this proposal has been postponed;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) how far its postponement has come as a set back to the peace process between the two countries; and

(e) whether this proposal is proposed to be revived?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (e) India had, on October 22, 2003, *inter alia,* proposed to Pakistan the commencement of a bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad. The technical level discussions that were scheduled to be held in Islamabad on April 8-9,2004 were postponed after mutual consultations. The issue was also raised during the meeting of Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan on June 27-28,2004 in New Delhi. Technical discussions would be necessary for operationalising the proposed service.

Depiction of Junagarh and Manavadar as part of Pakistan in a Pakistani publication

947. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has published a booklet named "Pakistan Basic Facts" wherein the parts of Gujarat has been shown as part of Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to see that those parts of Junagarh and Manavadar do not become a point of dispute and the Pakistan do not publish such matter which create controversies;

(c) whether the Chief Minister of Gujarat has written to the Prime Minister in this regard; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) Pakistani textbooks and documents are known to contain several inaccuracies and distortions about India and its international boundaries.

Chief Minister of Gujarat had written to Prime Minister in this regard.

Pakistan is well aware of India's firm and consistent position and the reality that Junagarh and Manavadar are an integral part of India.